

**OUTGOING
TELEGRAM****Department of State**INDICATE: ☐ COLLECT
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SENT TO: Ambassy, TEHRAN 1576 PRIORITY

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Origin
ULS

Your 1142.

Info:
RMR

Department seriously concerned over proposed Iranian legislation to claim

twelve-mile territorial sea by unilateral action. You should make approach at
highest level in effort obtain deferral pending second Law of Sea Conference.

Following points may be made:

1) UNGA on December 10 by vote 71 for, none against, 6 abstentions, passed
compromise resolution calling for Second Law of Sea Conference in March-April 1960
to seek international agreement on questions breadth territorial seas and fishery
limits.

2) Statements by various delegates during UN debate on resolution re-
flected implicit understanding that pending Conference governments would not
take actions which would prejudice success of Conference. No exception was
taken to this view.

3) In light this understanding, and because Iran voted for resolution,

Iran

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Iran has at least moral obligation not take unilateral action which would make more difficult reach agreement at Conference.

4) Timing of proposed legislation could be interpreted as deliberate effort embarrass (a) UN which with difficulty reached compromise on Law of Sea Conference which it then accepted by overwhelming majority, and (b) US whose position on narrow territorial seas well known as is US adherence to principle that any change in breadth of territorial sea must come about through international concord.

5) Action by Iran to claim 12-mile territorial sea would preclude or nullify Iranian complaints regarding similar action by Iraq. (Embtel 974.)

6) Narrow territorial seas give maximum freedom of maneuver to free world naval and air forces permitting such forces to be of great effectiveness in neutralizing threats arising from attempts of Communist imperialism extend their jurisdiction by force. This especially true in connection with Iran whose strategic link to US is primarily based on sea and air communications backed up by mobile power of ground force. (State Dept Bulletin Feb. 17, 1958, page 252.)

7) In connection with 6) above, at January 1958 Baghdad Pact meeting Secretary Dulles strongly and in some detail emphasized importance narrow territorial sea from strategic standpoint conference participants. Iran representative Ardalan noted Secretary's comments and stated his government would take them into account. (SECTO 38 from Ankara, repeated info Tehran unnn January 29, 1958.)

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On positive side suggest you consult with Iranian authorities as to specific problems they seek to resolve by proposed law. US might be helpful in finding alternate solution. Looney with experience first Geneva Conference may be assistance in this.

Does proposed legislation refer to Caspian?

If GOI inquires whether similar representations will be made to Iraq, you may give assurances on this score.

Ardalan informed today of substance this telegram.

Please report.

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